


State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
**Department of Health Services**



**GRAY DAVIS**  
Governor

 September 19, 2002

Dear Local Health Officer:

The Bush administration and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have directed health officials to implement Phase 1 of a National Smallpox Vaccination Plan. Critical public health and hospital workers who may be responding to an initial case or outbreak of smallpox will be asked to voluntarily serve on Smallpox Response Teams. Vaccination is desirable because these health care workers are at the highest risk of exposure to smallpox if a case appears. In addition, these teams will serve as initial vaccinators if there is the need to expand the vaccination program. Phase 1 vaccination will prepare us to better protect the American public against a future smallpox attack. The preliminary materials included in this packet are to help you notify your employees of their Smallpox Response Team eligibility. Participation on these teams is strictly voluntary.

Although no evidence has been released that smallpox presents an imminent threat to the U.S., consequences of such an event would be great, so our government is taking precautions to deal with this possibility. Phase 2 of voluntary vaccination will include additional medical personnel and first responders, such as firefighters, police, and EMT. Phase 3, if implemented, would include the general public. The federal government is not recommending vaccination for the general public at this time.

For effective communications, it is imperative that public health agencies speak with one voice. Message consistency, accuracy and timeliness will instill confidence that the public health system is responding in a sound manner.

We are providing materials, in advance, to help you in your notification efforts. It is important that eligible employees have enough information and time to make an informed decision about whether to be vaccinated for smallpox. Some employees also may need to get laboratory screening tests, such as HIV or pregnancy, to help them with their decision. Before the start of actual vaccination clinics, there will be an official packet of information for staff eligible for smallpox vaccination. A second packet of information will be given at vaccination clinics for those receiving the smallpox vaccine.



Do your part to help California save energy. To learn more about saving energy, visit the following web site:  
[www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html](http://www.consumerenergycenter.org/flex/index.html)

714 P Street, P.O. Box 942732, Sacramento, CA, ZIP 94234-7320  
(916) 657-3064

Internet Address: [www.dhs.ca.gov](http://www.dhs.ca.gov)

Local Health Officer  
Page 2  
December 19, 2002

Enclosed in this packet are the following items:

- Template letter informing employees of their eligibility status.
- CDC Fact Sheets:
  - Smallpox Overview (also in Spanish)
  - Vaccine Overview (also in Spanish)
  - Who Should NOT Receive the Smallpox Vaccine (also in Spanish)
  - Reactions after Smallpox Vaccination (also in Spanish)
  - Smallpox Vaccine Information Statement
- CDC Question & Answer sheet.
- CDC "Section 304 of the Homeland Security Act (Liability Issues)" Question & Answer sheet.
- CDC Self-Screening Checklist (*Draft 12-16-02*).

These preliminary materials are available on CDC's website in PDF and Word formats at [www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/reference/resource-kit.asp/](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/smallpox/reference/resource-kit.asp/).

While state and local smallpox response and preparedness planning has been ongoing, the impending delivery of the vaccine requires Phase 1 implementation to begin soon. The success of California's preparedness efforts depends on the coordinated participation of local health departments and hospitals.

Sincerely,

Kevin Reilly, D.V.M., M.P.V.M  
Deputy Director  
Prevention Services